



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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November 1, 2016
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Protecting Our Most Vulnerable Citizens

Protecting the most vulnerable among us is a top priority. This is especially true for those whose personal safety is at stake – those who cannot always stand up for themselves. There are two specific bills recently signed into law: one that helps children with disabilities, and one that assists domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and stalking survivors.

It is an unfortunate fact that children with disabilities are three times more likely to be sexually abused and almost twice as likely to experience physical abuse or neglect. These cases are often difficult for investigators, as many of these children may have communication, social, or intellectual difficulties. Investigators may struggle to obtain the information they need to protect these children and to prosecute the wrongdoers. To help these children, this session I authored Assembly Bill 667, a bill which will give child protective service workers the tools, training, and support they need when investigating cases where a child with a disability has been neglected or abused. All children deserve equal protection under the law.

Survivors of domestic abuse, sexual abuse, or human trafficking want a clean slate, a place where they can live in privacy. To help them, this session, I authored Assembly Bill 673, which creates an Address Confidentiality Program for survivors of all ages who have been victimized by domestic abuse, stalking, human trafficking, and more. My bill allows these survivors to use a free P.O. Box address instead of their home address anytime they need to provide their address. This allows them to go about their daily lives, while keeping the place where they are living confidential so that perpetrators cannot track them down. The bill also provides tips and resources for survivors by implementing a safety plan, giving them additional tools and strategies to stay safe.

These important bills give victims and survivors the help and tools they need so they can heal, be protected, move forward, and live their lives to their best ability. Every person deserves the chance to start a new life and to move forward with the life they have, especially when they have undergone and survived the toughest of horrors. These bills are a great stepping stone to help them do that.